

Message Text

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ACTION VO-05

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R 301551Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6563
INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN, SHUM, CVIS, SREF, RO, AU
SUBJECT: ROMANIAN EMIGRATION

REF: A) ROME 9568; B) STATE 131223; C) GENEVA 7862

1. WE ENDORSE THRUST OF GENEVA REFTEL, PARAS FIVE AND SIX, REGARDING ROMANIAN EMIGRATION QUESTION, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO NEED FOR CLEAR ENUNCIATION OF POLICY. ALL AFFECTED POSTS WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND RATIONALE UNDERLYING CURRENT PROCEDURES, WHICH OBVIOUSLY APPEAR ANOMALOUS TO SOME.

2. THERE ARE TWO OTHER, BUT RELATED MATTERS THAT CONCERN THIS POST DIRECTLY AND WHICH REQUIRE RECONSIDERATION BY DEPARTMENT.

(A) WE FIND OURSELVES INCREASINGLY ON RECEIVING END OF COMPLAINTS FROM INTERESTED PARTIES IN U.S. TO EFFECT THAT THIS POST IS IMPEDING ONWARD PASSAGE OF SOME ROMANIANS TO UNITED STATES AFTER USG HAS FACILITATED THEIR DEPARTURE FROM ROMANIA. FACT IS THAT APPLICANTS HAVE
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BEEN REFUSED IMMIGRANT VISAS IN BUCHAREST, OFTEN ON BASIS OF DEPARTMENT'S ADVISORY OPINION, AND/OR REFUGEE STATUS IN VIENNA BY INS. IT HAPPENS, HOWEVER, THAT CASE FILE OF THESE INELIGIBLES WINDS UP WITH THIS EMBASSY'S CONSULAR SECTION BECAUSE INDIVIDUAL INVOLVED IS STRANDED IN AUSTRIA. DEPARTMENT RECENTLY REFERRED TO US FOR REPLY AN INQUIRY ADDRESSED TO SECSTATE ALONG WITH DEPARTMENT'S

FILE ON CASE. IT APPEARS TO US THAT REPLY WOULD MOST APPROPRIATELY COME FROM DEPARTMENT, AS IT IS LATTER THAT IS IN BEST POSITION TO EXPLAIN WHY USG FACILITATES DEPARTURE OF INELIGIBLES FROM ROMANIA, BUT THEN ABANDONS THEM IN THIRD COUNTRY WHERE THEY NEITHER WISH TO REMAIN NOR ARE PARTICULARLY WELCOME.

(B) WE HAVE PROBLEM WITH DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTION REFTEL B THAT CONOFF BE DIVERTED FROM PRIORITY DUTIES OF SERVICE TO U.S. CITIZENS AND AUSTRIAN VISITORS TO U.S. TO UNDERTAKE TWO OR THREE-HOUR ROUND TRIP TO AIRPORT DURING OUR PEAK SEASON TO CANCEL U.S. DOCUMENTATION WHICH ENABLED REFUGEE TO DEPART ROMANIA. ON MUNDANE LEVEL, SUCH DEMANDS FOR INCREASING INVOLVEMENT OF OUR SMALL AND RECENTLY TRIMMED CONSULAR SECTION WITH REFUGEE MATTERS IMPOSES SEVERE STRAIN ON US, GIVEN GROWTH IN OUR NON-IMMIGRANT VISA WORKLOAD AND WELFARE/PROTECTION PROBLEMS OCCASIONED BY MORE THAN 600,000 AMERICAN TOURISTS ANNUALLY. TAXING THIS POST WITH REQUIREMENT TO TRACK DOWN REFUGEES AND THEIR VALID VISAS OR TCP STAMPS IS ASKING US TO PERFORM A SERVICE FOR WHICH WE SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE PERSONNEL RESOURCES. ON DEEPER LEVEL, HOWEVER, WE STRONGLY QUESTION PROPRIETY OF, IN EFFECT, SEIZING ALIEN'S PASSPORT AND EFFECTING CANCELLATION OF PART OF ITS CONTENTS IN FRONT OF AUSTRIAN IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS. SUCH PROCEDURE STRIKES US AS HEAVY-HANDED AND COULD HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SERIOUSLY ADVERSE PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPACT IN AUSTRIA. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO INSTRUCT ALIEN TO REPORT TO CONSULAR SECTION FOR CANCELLATION, OR TO DEVELOP SYSTEM OF ALTERNATIVE DEPARTURE "DOCUMENTATION." BORG

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